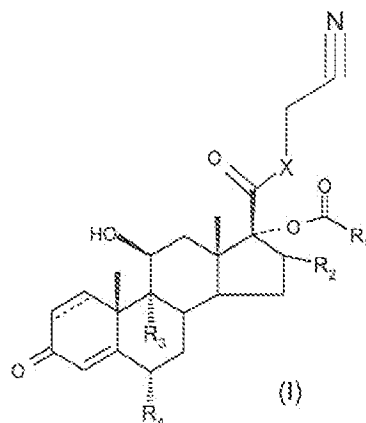


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

In the Claims:

1. (Original) A compound of formula (I):



wherein

X represents O or S;

R₁ represents C₁₋₆ alkyl, C₃₋₈ cycloalkyl, C₃₋₈ cycloalkylmethyl or C₃₋₈ cycloalkenyl any of which optionally may be substituted by one or more methyl groups or halogen atoms or

R₁ represents aryl, substituted aryl, heteroaryl or substituted heteroaryl;

R₂ represents hydrogen, methyl, which may be in either the α or β configuration, or methylene;

R₃ and R₄ are the same or different and each independently represents hydrogen, halogen or a methyl group;


and  represents a single or a double bond;

or a physiologically acceptable salt or solvate thereof.

2. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein X represents O.
3. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein R₁ represents a C₃₋₆ cycloalkyl group optionally substituted by one or more methyl or chlorine groups.
4. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein R₁ represents 2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropyl.

5. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein R₂ represents methyl in the α -configuration.

6. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein R₃ and R₄ are both fluorine.

7. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein  represents a double bond.

8. (Previously presented) A compound as claimed in claim 1 which is

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethycyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid *S*-cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(4-[(Diethylamino)sulphonyl]benzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid *S*-cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(5-Chloro-4-methoxy-thiophene-3-carbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid *S*-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethycyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(2,6-difluorobenzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(4-methoxybenzoyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(4-Cyanobenzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclopentylmethylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3,3-dimethylbutanoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(2-isopropyl-1,3-thiazole-4-carbonyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(quinoline-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-17 α -(5-methylthio-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(5-ethyl-isoxazole-3-carbonyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

9 α -Fluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 β -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androst-4-ene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(5-Chloro-4-methoxy-thiophene-3-carbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3-(difluoromethylthio)benzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester.

9. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 8 which is

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

9 α -Fluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 β -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclopentylmethylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3,3-dimethylbutanoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3-(difluoromethylthio)benzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(5-ethyl-isoxazole-3-carbonyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-17 α -(5-methylthio-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(2-isopropyl-1,3-thiazole-4-carbonyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

10. (Currently amended) A compound as claimed in claim 9 which is

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

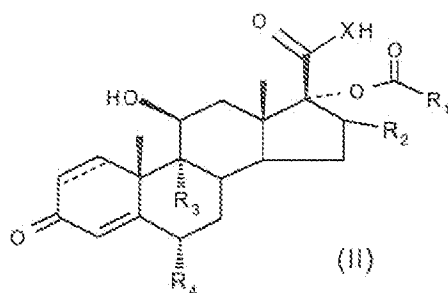
11. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 10 which is

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

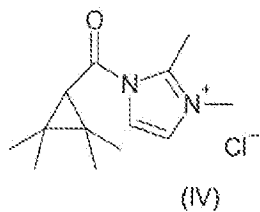
12-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula (I) as defined in claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof ~~together,~~ ~~if desirable,~~ in admixture with one or more physiologically acceptable diluents or carriers.

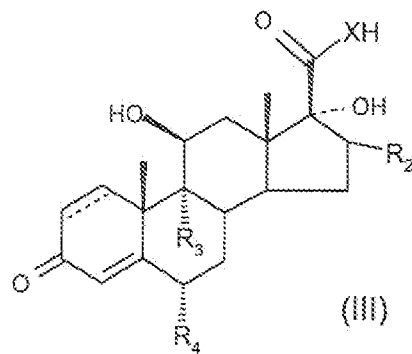
15. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical aerosol formulation comprising a compound of formula (I) as defined in claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof, and a fluorocarbon or hydrogen-containing chlorofluoro carbon as propellant, optionally in combination with a surfactant and/or a cosolvent.
16. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15 which further comprises ~~another~~ one or more therapeutically active agents.
17. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16 in which said ~~another~~ one or more therapeutically active agents is a β_2 -adrenoreceptor agonist.
18. (Currently amended) A method for the treatment of a human or animal subject with an ~~anti-inflammatory~~ inflammatory and/or allergic condition, which method comprises administering to said human or animal subject an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) as defined in claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof.
- 19-20. (Cancelled)
21. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a compound of formula (II)



where R_1 represents 2,2,3,3 – tetramethyl cyclopropyl and R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , X and are as defined in claim 1 which process comprises reaction of the 1,2-dimethyl-1H-imidazolium ester of 2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropane carboxylic acid (IV)



with the corresponding 17 α -hydroxyl derivative of formula (III)



22. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 21 in which X represents O.